

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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**REMARKS
BY
U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH DAN MOZENA
MULIA UNION PARISHAD OPEN BUDGET MEETING
OPENING CEREMONY
MULIA HIGH SCHOOL GROUND, NARAIL SADAR, NARAIL
SUNDAY, MAY 11, 2014**

A. Gaffar Khan, Deputy Commissioner, Narail District

Monirul Islam, Superintendent of Police, Narail

Shah Abdul Shadi, Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Narail Sadar Upazila

Rabindronath Adhikari, Chairman, Mulia Union Parishad

Jotindronath Sarker, Principal, Agriculture and Technology College, Mulia

Ashok Kumar Biswas, Headmaster, Mulia High School

Taleya Rehman, Executive Director, Democracy Watch

... and all who believe in democracy ...

Asalaamu alaikum ... nameskar ... and good afternoon

Democracy

Democracy ... it's a big word ...

... it's a big idea ...

So many big, fat books have been written about democracy ...

... so many people have talked and talked about democracy ...

... so many words and words and words about democracy.

Why so much clutter?

I don't think democracy is so hard to understand.

My favorite American President Abraham Lincoln said it best: ...

Democracy is governance of the people, by the people, for the people.

Democracy is governance of the people, by the people, for the people ... that's what Abraham Lincoln said.

But Abraham Lincoln lived over 150 years ago.

I think we can define democracy more simply.

Democracy is happening right in this room ... today.

Here is decision making ... governance ... being done of the people, by the people, for the people.

You ... the good people of Mulia Union Parishad ... are making decisions ...

... these are decisions of the people ... you, by the people ... you, for the people ... you.

As you can tell from your meetings, democracy is not easy, often is not pretty ... democracy is hard ...

... democracy is hard, but it is the best way to effect governance ...

... democracy means balancing competing interests, setting priorities, making choices and making decisions ...

... democracy is about listening to others, trying to understand their views, working toward compromise ...

... everyone has to give a bit for the greater good ... that is democracy.

You see ... democracy, indeed, is happening right in this room ...

... and I applaud you for your commitment to practicing democracy as you work together to use your resources to build and improve your community ... that is what democracy is all about.

I am proud that America through USAID and Democracy Watch is your strong partner as you

...

... you, the leaders of Mulia Union Parishad ... you, the people of Mulia Union Parishad ...

... right here in this very place, Mulia Union Parishad ...

... you are working to build democracy ...

... you are working to build governance of the people, by the people, for the people.

You must be so proud of your great role in building a democratic Bangladesh, a Bangladesh ... of the people, by the people, for the people.

Thank you.

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**As prepared for delivery*